

REMARKS

By the present Amendment, claims 2, 3, 6, 8, and 11-13 have been amended, and claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10 cancelled. Claims 14-17 are newly presented for consideration. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 6, 8, 11-17 are now pending in the application. Claims 14-17 are independent.

In the Office Action of March 14, 2005, September 22, 2004, claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,393,464 B1 to Dieterman in view of Patent Application Publication US 2002/0107950 to Lu. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action indicates that Dieterman discloses a method for operating an electronic messaging system that includes most of the features recited in the claims. The Office Action indicates that Dieterman discloses routing of an electronic message to a first folder not associated with the first user, instead of the first user; presenting the electronic message to a first approver to approve or reject the message. In particular, the Office Action states that Dieterman discloses delivery of the electronic message to the first user if approved, and routing the electronic message to a third folder not associated with the first user if the electronic message is rejected. The Office Action admits that Dieterman fails to teach routing the electronic message to a second folder not associated with the first user. Lu is relied upon for teaching redirection of the electronic message to one or more supervisory recipients.

Newly presented independent claim 14 defines a method for operating an electronic messaging system that comprises:

routing an electronic message intended for a first user to a first folder not associated with the first user, instead of to the first user;

presenting the electronic message to a first approver to approve or reject the message;

if delivery of the electronic message to the first user is approved, routing the electronic message to a second folder not associated with the first user and to the first user;

if delivery of the electronic message to the first user is rejected, routing the electronic message to a third folder not associated with the first user and not to the first user;

presenting the electronic message to a second approver to approve or reject the message;
and

displaying to the first approver and to the second approver representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval.

At least one aspect of independent claim 14 involves presentation of the electronic message to a second approver to approve or reject the message. Additionally, both first and second approvers are presented with representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval. According to such a feature, electronic messages can be quickly approved or rejected so that they may be routed to the first user or deleted.

The Office Action alleges that Lu discloses directing the electronic message to one or more supervisory recipients, and that the intended recipient and supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts. However, Lu only discusses the use of one or more supervisory recipients. Neither reference appears to disclose the feature of “displaying to the first approver and to the second approver representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval,” as recited in independent claim 14.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 14 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 2, 3, and 6 depend from independent claim 14, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 14.

Independent claim 15 defines a method of operating an electronic messaging system that comprises:

- directing an outgoing electronic message having an intended recipient sent by a first user to a first folder not associated with the first user, instead of to the intended recipient;

- presenting the electronic message to a first approver to approve or reject the message;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the intended recipient is approved, routing the electronic message to a second folder not associated with the first user and to the intended recipient;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the intended recipient is rejecting, routing the electronic message to a third folder not associated with the first user and not to the intended recipient;

- presenting the electronic message to a second approver to approve or reject the message;
- and

- displaying to the first approver and to the second approver representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval.

Independent claim 15 also includes the limitation of “displaying to the first approver and to the second approver representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval.” As previously discussed with respect to independent claim 14, this feature is not disclosed by the applied references.

Accordingly, independent claim 15 is believed allowable over the art of record.

Claim 8 depends from independent claim 15 and is also believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 15.

Independent claim 16 defines a computer program product, residing on a computer-readable medium, that comprises instructions for causing a computer to:

- route an incoming electronic message intended for a first user to a first folder not associated with the first user, instead of to the first user;

- if delivery of the incoming electronic message is approved, route the incoming electronic message to a second folder not associated with the first user and to the first user;

- if delivery of the incoming electronic message is rejected, route the incoming electronic message to a third folder not associated with the first user and not to the first user;

- direct an outgoing electronic message having an intended recipient sent by the first user to a fourth folder not associated with the first user, instead of to the intended recipient;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the intended recipient is approved, route the electronic message to a fifth folder not associated with the first user and to the intended recipient;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the intended recipient is rejecting, route the electronic message to a sixth folder not associated with the first user and not to the intended recipient; and

- synchronize a first display of messages for the first user at a first location with a second display of messages for the first user at a second location.

The Office Action further alleges that Dieterman and Lu disclose synchronization of the electronic messages. This is not the case. Dieterman indicates that certain synchronization can take place between the ISP and client. This synchronization, however, relates to the allowed list of sender addresses that have been approved for delivery to the client terminal. The synchronization of Dieterman has nothing to do with different displays of messages at different locations. Lu indicates that messages may be directed to one or more supervisory recipients, but does not discuss any type of synchronization. Neither reference discloses or suggests synchronizing “a first display of messages for the first user at a first location with a second display of messages for the first user at a second location.”

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 16 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 11-13 depend from independent claim 16, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 16.

Independent claim 17 defines a method for operating an electronic messaging system that comprises:

- routing an electronic message intended for a first user to a first folder not associated with the first user, instead of to the first user;

- presenting the electronic message to a first approver to approve or reject the message;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the first user is approved, routing the electronic message to a second folder not associated with the first user and to the first user;

- if delivery of the electronic message to the first user is rejected, routing the electronic message to a third folder not associated with the first user and not to the first user;

- presenting the electronic message to a second approver to approve or reject the message;

- displaying to the first approver and to the second approver representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval; and

- synchronizing the display to the first approver and the display to the second approver of representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval.

As discussed above with respect to independent claims 14 and 16, the applied references fail to disclose either displaying representations of the electronic messages to the first and second approvers, or the type of synchronizing performed by the claimed invention. The type of synchronization performed Dieterman also has nothing to do with the representation of electronic messages presented to the different approvers. Furthermore, the Office Action admits (on page 5) that Dieterman fails to disclose presenting the electronic message to a second approver.

Accordingly, Dieterman cannot disclose or suggest the feature of synchronizing different displays of the approvers. Lu indicates that messages may be directed to one or more supervisory recipients, but does not discuss any type of synchronization. Neither reference discloses or suggests "synchronizing the display to the first approver and the display to the second approver of representations of electronic messages that have been presented for approval."

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 17 is allowable over the art of record.

For the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims (2, 3, 6, 8, 11-17) are in condition for allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is believed in order, and courteously solicited.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

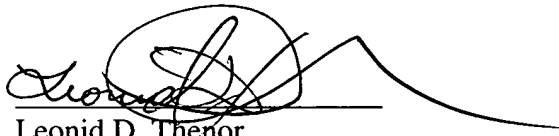
Application Serial No. 10/624,445
Attorney Docket No. 113715.134 US1
Reply to Office Action dated March 14, 2005

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required for this Response, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account number 08-0219.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of which is required to make this response timely, and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such, to deposit account number 08-0219.

Respectfully submitted,


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